

DID YOU KNOW?

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How shall we avoid a calamity for the future of our continent?

Productiveness of soil can be maintained by an intelligent plan of land use. Most people do not realise that water should be as productive, acre for acre, as land, and of all the gifts of nature we have misused the waters most. Most of the food producing elements of our continent come under the head of renewable resources. Our waters can be restored, our forests replanted, our wildlife replenished, and our rivers and lakes be made to again furnish their rich quota of life's necessities.

The processes for this restoration are known. Demonstration projects have been successfully carried out, but on such a small scale that they may be compared with the test tube of the chemist in his laboratory. The application on a large scale requires the support of a wide public understanding and a popular demand. The application of these policies would constitute real conservation.

We are, then, confronted with our first most serious problem of education. Our public must be taught what conservation really means now and to the future of our country. There are no text-books and there are no teachers. In fact, there is at the present time no place in our public or private schools for such a system of education. Worse and more of it, our political officers of government, elected by popular vote, are no more aware of the needs for conservation than the public. Because our governmental leaders are unaware of the conservation needs there is no support among our political leaders for adequate measures to accomplish the necessary ends. Conservation projects are always defeated in legislative halls. All our appropriations, generally speaking, go in the opposite direction, for new power dams to destroy more rivers, new reclamation projects to drain more lakes and marshes, new roads to open up the last remaining wilderness to the tourist, forest fires, and waste.

Educate the public and create a public pressure upon our government leaders and demand

adequate recognition of conservation needs. Bring together, as an active national force, all organisations in this country that are awake to the importance of our outdoor heritage, all people who for sport or recreation, for health, business, scientific interest, or plain love of the outdoors, are willing to do something on behalf of sustaining resources and the wildlife of forest, field, and stream.

A CALL TO NEW ZEALANDERS

WAKE UP OR PERISH!

Although a disastrous flood occasionally makes New Zealanders think of the need of well-planned action against the soil-destroying forces of erosion, the general public tends to lapse into apathy. The people are more concerned with minor things of the moment, matters under the eye, than with the less visible problems of saving the country. In "The Rape of the Earth," Dr. R. O. Whyte, Ph.D., Deputy Director Imperial Bureau of Pastures and Forage Crops, Wales, has a passage which should make New Zealanders wake up and take notice.

"The most urgent problem in New Zealand," he writes, "is the control of floods and the prevention of the excessive washing of soil down the short river courses into the sea, a process which threatens to leave the country like an 'emaciated skeleton.' Deforestation by cutting, burning, or overgrazing of the undergrowth in the mountain areas by sheep, cattle, deer and other animals has greatly accelerated run-off and soil-wash, and there is hardly a river in the country which is not affected by periodic flooding. The fact that these rivers frequently pass through rich dairying country combines with the mountain damage to make the conservation of soil, water and vegetation a pressing problem in New Zealand."